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in the teaching of Paul, in the teaching of the Fourth Gospel? Or is Christ's mind found revealed in the Synoptic Gospels? If there, are those principles applicable to society, or must we fall back upon the theory of the interim ethic? Such questions, once academic, press hard upon the thinking man in the street to-day. In Professor Thomas's book he will find his questions fearlessly faced, honestly and intelligently discussed, met with sympathy and insight, with learning and candor. It strikes me as the most radical book written by an American Churchman. But this is a time when one is impatient with any writer who does not try to get at the roots of things. Professor Thomas is no iconoclast, but he is a builder of a better theological and social order, one that is in harmony with the mind of Christ and the needs of man.

J. HOWARD MELISH.

THE GOD OF VENGEANCE. By Sholom Ash. Boston, Mass.: The Stratford Company. Price, \$1.00 net.

The stories and plays of Sholom Ash form strikingly realistic contributions to the Yiddish literary revival inaugurated by such men as Abramovitch, Rabinovitch, and Peretz. In the hands of these forerunners, the long-despised Yiddish vernacular began to reveal theretofore unsuspected values in tone-color, idiom, and melodic connotations. Ash is their lineal inheritor and, like them, has drunk deeply not only in Jewish sources, but also in the lavish fountains of the Slavic literatures, so that his works (best known among which are *Meri*, *The Road to Self*, *Mottke the Vagabond*, *The Sinner*, and the present drama) are instinct alike with the stoic, melancholy realism and the mystical, pensive beauty of the Russian masters.

In *The God of Vengeance*, admirably translated into English by Dr. Isaac Goldberg, and frequently presented since 1910 upon European stages, Ash develops through three cumulatively tragic acts the inevitable spiritual ruin overtaking Yekel Tchaftchovitch, the middle-aged, coarse, yet not ungenial owner of a Russian brothel, who loves intensely his daughter Rifkele, supporting her in carefully guarded purity on the proceeds of the impurity of others. Her mother, Sarah, was formerly a daughter of joy, and most of the other characters are in Yekel's

professional employment. Yekel secures from a pious scribe a copy of the Holy Scroll (the Scriptures of the Pentateuch) to place in Rifkele's room as a talisman against threatened evil. His superstitious awe of the Scroll and his unselfish affection for Rifkele are all that redeem him from utter callousness. "But they say," declares Reizel to Hindel, both of them inmates of the cellar-brothel, and somewhat reminiscent of the Girls in *Pippa Passes*, "that you mustn't read from such a Holy Scroll, and that the daughters of such mothers become what the mothers themselves were . . . that something draws them on like a magnet, and that the Evil Spirit drags them down into the mire. . . ."

And so it proves with Rifkele, in a *dénouement* of great pity and horror, not unmingled with memorable symbolisms.

GEORGE HERBERT CLARKE.

JEWISH THEOLOGY SYSTEMATICALLY CONSIDERED. By Dr. K. Kohler, President Hebrew Union College. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1918. 492 pp.

One of the most important fruits of modern biblical scholarship is the recognition of the fact that the prophets of ancient Israel were the exponents not of a narrow national cult but of a universal religion based on the fact of essential human solidarity and involving a mission of reconciliation whereby the whole human race should be brought to vital relationship with the Divine Father from whom it was estranged. It is of the genius of what is known as Judaism to maintain this prophetic vision and especially to stimulate the Jews themselves to confidence in and loyalty to their sense of mission. This is the spirit of the present work on Jewish theology. The book itself is directed first of all to the Jew that he may be kept loyal to his spiritual heritage. Secondly it is intended for the student of religions, to present to him the truths of universal religion and to show how far the profoundest type of Judaism has embodied its essentials. The student of theology and of Biblical interpretation cannot fail to profit from a careful study of Dr. Kohler's contribution. That Dr. Kohler should completely succeed in doing justice to the universal religion embodied in the most enlightened type of Christianity would be expecting too